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Meat inspection is one of the most important subjects in veterinary study and also one of the most important activities in the practice of veterinary doctors. Meat and meat products are widely consumed by workers. The health of these workers must be protected from bacterial and parasitic infections, transferred from animal to man by consumption of meat and meat products. Since infection with pathogenic bacteria or nonpathogenic bacteria can take place either in the living animal (primary infection) or after slaughtering as in commercial handling (secondary infection), sanitary precautions should be observed not only in the slaughterhouse, but also wherever meat is handled. This is a matter of economic importance, especially with respect to meat products produced for export.

The problem is important from the standpoint of public health and the state, and requires a recognition of existing shortcomings and a recommendation as to what should be done in the future. This applies to the work of university departments and the organization of meat plants. It applies especially to the training of students in techniques of inspection before and after slaughter, and approval of meat and meat products for consumption. Students should also acquire a knowledge of the fundamentals of the technology and the sanitary aspects of meat processing, problems of distribution, and the economics of marketing meat. No less important is a knowledge of the organization, administration, and sanitary and technical facilities of meat plants, processing of condemned meat, and legislation on the inspection of animals and meat in relation to present conditions and the latest scientific discoveries.

In Poland there are three veterinary faculties attached to the Universities of Lublin, Warsaw, and Wroclaw. Only at the Veterinary Faculty of Lublin University is meat inspection recognized as part of the study of food products of animal origin and represented by an experienced full professor. At the other two faculties, meat inspection is taught by assistants without complete academic and teaching qualifications. There are also two departments of meat-processing technology. One is the Szkoła Główna Gospodarstwa Wiejskiego (Main School of Rural Economy) in Warsaw under a professor specializing in the field. The other is at the Polytechnic at Lodz. Because of the above state of affairs, university students do not receive uniform training in the theory and practice of meat inspection, which is later unfavorably reflected in their professional work.

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Meat inspection depends on a knowledge of almost all subjects in veterinary study, especially descriptive and topographical anatomy, physiology, chemistry, histology, zootechnology, microbiology, parasitology, pathological anatomy, the pathology and therapy of internal diseases, epizootiology, and hygiene. Technology is a new branch of the science. The following points should be stressed in lectures and practical applications: microscopic and laboratory techniques in the inspection of meat and meat products, meat processing and preserving, grading, technology of processing condemned meat, the processing of by-products, inspection of fowl, game, and fish on a larger scale than heretofore, government regulations on the inspection of meat and animals for slaughter, the economics and organization of meat marketing, and statistics and industrial hygiene work on occupational diseases among slaughterhouse personnel.

For adequate preparation, the following steps are necessary:

1. A uniform system of teaching meat inspection in all veterinary faculties should be based on a new curriculum of lectures and laboratory work. The practical application of the curriculum to current problems of meat inspection in Poland should be emphasized by establishing close contact with meat-processing plants during the academic year and during vacation practice periods. Each student should do field work in a meat-dressing or meat-processing plant, and should submit a report on his work to the head of the department.
2. Student tours to model slaughterhouses and meat-processing plants should be arranged to acquaint students with technical facilities, organization, and administration.
3. Departments should be supplied with equipment and the latest scientific literature, and staffed adequately with research assistants.
4. Research directors of the veterinary faculties in Warsaw and Wroclaw should be sent to the Vsesoyuznyy Nauchno-Issledovatel'skiy Institut Myasnoy Promyshlennosti (All-Union Scientific Research Institute of the Meat Industry) and to the Myaskombinat (Meat Combine) in Moscow, to study the latest progress in meat inspection.
5. Job opportunities should be created for future research personnel.

The present organization of the meat-dressing and meat-processing plants leaves much to be desired. When they were taken over by the Central Meat Administration, organizational chaos ensued which has not yet been entirely corrected. Often, the economy factor is given major attention, without proper consideration for sanitation and hygiene. Meat contamination results in monetary loss and sickness among the population. The directors of meat-dressing and meat-processing plants are not always capable specialists. The status and jurisdiction of veterinary doctors in slaughterhouses and meat-processing plants are not specifically defined. Veterinary doctors are responsible for the quality of production but have no effective voice in the process. The number of animals slaughtered daily often exceeds the capacity of the slaughteringhouse facilities, especially refrigeration. Not all veterinary doctors, especially those employed in the meat-processing plants, have the proper theoretical and practical training in meat-processing technology.

The organization of a slaughterhouse depends on its operation -- retail or wholesale. Retail slaughterhouses should serve the needs of the consumer, the working masses. Wholesale slaughterhouses should serve one client, the wholesaler. In the Six-Year Plan the retail slaughterhouses will rapidly disappear and wholesale slaughterhouses will take their place. They should possess modern technical equipment, with the greatest consideration given to sanitation, hygiene, and working conditions. Specifically, this means refrigeration adequate for the number of cattle and hogs slaughtered daily, and adequate for the distribution of meat. Lockers, showers, and reading rooms should be provided for

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the workers. The waste processing plants of Bacutil should be removed from the premises of the slaughterhouses, since they are the source of a disagreeable and penetrating odor and a breeding place for flies. Uniform requirements should be set up for trucks used to haul meat. Under present conditions the trucks violate all rules of hygiene, and are responsible for spreading germs and contaminating the meat during transport. Personal hygiene in the slaughterhouses leaves much to be desired. Waste products of slaughtering operations, such as the larynx, trachea, diaphragm, udder, tail, hooves, horns, snout, eyes, reproductive organs, bile, blood, undigested food, bones, ears, etc., should be utilized for industrial purposes by suitable methods. Meat-inspection laboratories, suitably equipped and staffed with specialists in veterinary medicine, should be established at slaughterhouses and meat-processing plants.

In regard to organization, the management should be familiar not only with administration and economics, but also with the fundamental principles of hygiene. Work in the plants should be standardized according to manuals which give general rules of conduct and outline specific duties of the more important administrative and technical personnel such as the doorman, foreman, stockyard guard, meat-processing specialists, etc. Sanitation and veterinary personnel should be independent of the plant administration, so that in performing their duties they are not influenced by the producer. Veterinary doctors assigned to slaughterhouses, meat-processing plants, and the retail butchers not yet liquidated perform a public service and should be independent of the plant management. However, for uniformity they should be responsible to the Veterinary Department of the Ministry of Agriculture and Land Reform, through the veterinary divisions of the national councils of the first and second instance. They should take an active part in production conferences. Through extension courses, veterinary doctors should learn the latest findings in meat inspection, and especially in meat-processing technology and economics. Veterinarians, especially in the large plants, should become familiar with the facilities and organization of USSR meat combines and the meat-processing plants in Czechoslovakia. Technical assistants should be trained in the slaughterhouses and processing plants, and periodic work consultations should be arranged with specialists in particular fields. The publication of an information bulletin on the latest achievements in meat inspection and meat processing in Poland, the USSR, and the people's democracies is greatly needed. Present legislative regulations must be radically revised. The 22 March 1928 order of the President of the Republic concerning inspection of slaughter animals and meat, and supervision of food, the Minister of Agriculture's 31 December 1928 directive on official slaughterhouse and meat inspection circuits and procedures, with all pertinent supplements, should be modernized and adapted to the latest scientific discoveries and the present organization of meat marketing. The above orders make no allowances for changing conditions, are not compatible with present legal requirements, and do not uniformly regulate a nationalized meat industry. It is also desirable to issue a basic law on slaughtering, regulations for the protection of slaughter animals and meat, and a model charter for the slaughterhouse as an industrial enterprise.

The 10 December 1936 directive of the Ministry of Public Welfare on the supervision of meat and meat products should be changed to transfer control over meat and meat products from the public health service to the veterinary doctors exclusively. At present, the dual system of approving meat for consumption divides responsibility for cases of food poisoning from meat. The veterinary doctor is responsible for grading meat in the slaughterhouse, while the municipal or powiat doctor of the national councils is responsible for its acceptability for commercial transactions. These orders should be changed so that all sanitary and hygienic aspects of meat inspection in both slaughterhouses and marketing are assigned to veterinary doctors, since they alone possess the proper scientific and practical training. Statistics show that food poisoning usually results from the consumption of meat contaminated in marketing, rather than meat derived from diseased animals. Under present conditions, in cases of mass food poisoning it is difficult to determine who is responsible, the veterinary or the public health officer.

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To eliminate the unsatisfactory conditions briefly outlined above, and to bring meat inspection and meat marketing in Poland to the proper standard of quality so important from the standpoint of hygiene, economics, distribution, and export, it would be necessary to create a Centralny Naukowo-Doswiadczalny Instytut Miesoznawcy (Central Scientific and Experimental Institute for Meat Inspection) on the model of the All-Union Scientific Research Institute of the Meat Industry in Moscow. This institute would include the following divisions: organization, technical, hygiene of meat and meat products, sanitary working conditions and industrial safety, experimentation in the technology and quality of meat processing, grading, processing, economics and statistics, technology, and personnel training.

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